United Nations CEDAW/C/BDI/Q/5-6/Add.1

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
30 June 2016
English
Original: French

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
Sixty-fifth session
24 October-18 November 2016
Item 4 of the provisional agenda
Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention

List of issues and questions in relation to the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Burundi

Addendum

Replies of Burundi*

[Date received: 30 June 2016]

Note: The present document is being circulated in English, French and Spanish only.
* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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General context

1. The Government of Burundi has taken steps to address the negative impact of the conflict on the lives of women and girls. During the conflict, the Government scaled up its efforts to protect the population in general and women in particular. Various peace messages were circulated (Statement by the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Public Security, and the Minister of Education) in the context of implementing a policy of zero tolerance for human rights violations, launched by the Head of State in 2007. The Minister of Human Rights, Social Affairs and Gender issued statements more frequently in an effort to make all Burundians aware of the need to address human rights violations, in particular sexual and gender-based violence. The two parties (the opposition, including the rebels, and the Government (security forces)) were offered guidance on respect for women's rights. Repeated reminders were issued to apply the Criminal Code in force, which prescribes important measures to punish the crime of sexual and gender-based violence.

2. Emergency initiatives included the establishment of a working group on sexual and gender-based violence, which brings together all actors (the Government, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and international and national organizations) seeking to provide comprehensive care and capable of responding quickly to survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

3. In the same vein, the Government has continued the implementation of the civilian disarmament and patriotic education programme.

4. In order to ensure the meaningful participation of women in peacemaking and peacebuilding processes, the Government of Burundi organized a public "Open Door Day" on the implementation of resolution 1325(2000) in October 2015. Peacebuilding priorities in keeping with the circumstances were determined by women and submitted to the Government and to the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in Burundi.

5. In April, consultations on the theme of "Women, peace and security" were organized by civil society organizations, on online platforms and in forums, in every part of the country to provide input on elaborating a "Women's Agenda" setting out women's priorities for building lasting peace.

6. The Government supported other initiatives by various women's organizations with a view to strengthening security in Burundi.

7. Women have been incorporated into the joint security committees established at all levels (hillside communities, communal, provincial and national).

8. Still another initiative was the establishment of the National Commission for Inter-Burundian Dialogue, tasked with organizing an inclusive and participatory dialogue with strong grass-roots involvement, including women, who represent approximately 52 per cent of the population.

Legislative framework

9. The 2009 revision of the Criminal Code provided an opportunity to incorporate strong legislation on violence against women (articles 556 to 562). The

draft law on the prevention, protection and punishment of gender-based sexual violence reinforces the Criminal Code revised in 2009. The importance of this draft law is that it deals with all aspects, from prevention to punishment, including comprehensive care for victims. It covers preventive, educational and social dimensions, as well as assistance and monitoring of victims.

10. As of this date, the draft law has been adopted by the Government and by Parliament.

Access to justice

11. Both women and men have access to justice and all women and men have the right to a fair trial (see articles 13 and 22 of the 2005 Constitution).

12. Concerning measures to ensure women's access to legal aid and legal representation in court proceedings, at the institutional level, the Department of Legal Aid for Victims of Human Rights Violations was established within the Ministry of Human Rights, Social Affairs and Gender. It is responsible for providing guidance and support to women, especially vulnerable women who have been victims of any sort of violence, in the various courts. The Government also established the Centre for the Promotion of Human Rights and the Prevention of Genocide, designed to educate the population on respect for human rights, the content of legislation and procedures for gaining access to justice. Family and Community Development Centres (CDFCs), which are decentralized units within the Ministry of Human Rights, Social Affairs and Gender, are responsible for listening, offering guidance and providing assistance to victims of sexual and gender-based violence; ensuring their comprehensive care; and producing relevant data. At the operational level, a legal aid fund has been set up in the Ministry of Justice for the purpose of paying lawyers who represent vulnerable persons, the majority of them women, in the courts.

13. One innovation was the establishment and operation of community networks to combat sexual and gender-based violence, bolstered by sexual and gender-based violence focal points in the high courts to ensure the expeditious processing of cases.

14. With regard to data on the number of women prisoners, the following table gives a breakdown for each year.

Data on the number of women prisoners

Year	*Total prison population*	*No. of women*
2009	124 824	3 849
2010	120 282	4 164
2011	128 019	5 015
2012	107 057	4 335
Until May 2013	33 483	1 650
2014	96 719	4 645
2015	96 374	4 142
March 2016	9 317	681

15. Women are imprisoned for various reasons, including infanticide, witchcraft, land disputes, and participation in armed gangs.

16. Female detention centres are regularly monitored by the Government, civil society organizations and the Independent National Commission on Human Rights with a view to improving prison conditions in these facilities. Recommendations are formulated and transmitted to the competent authorities. One result of such monitoring is the construction of the women's section in the Mpimba central prison (province of Bujumbura Mairie) in 2015, which has eased overcrowding and helped to control the violence against women.

National machinery for the advancement of women

17. Although some partners have withdrawn their support, others continue to provide support to the country through various development programmes and projects.

18. The National Gender Policy was updated in 2012 and will remain in effect until 2025. Immediately after its adoption, it was publicized by the Government in collaboration with its partners. In 2011, the Government also introduced a budget appropriation for implementation of the National Gender Policy. The vast majority of the Policy's implementing agencies are in the public sector and on the government payroll, namely, the Ministry of Human Rights, Social Affairs and Gender; sectoral ministries and their departments; and parliamentarians.

19. The evaluation of the five-year action plan (2012-2016) for implementation of the National Gender Policy is being prepared.

20. Gender-disaggregated data is collected by institutions under the supervision of the Burundian Institute of Statistics and Economic Surveys (ISTEEBU). Pending the establishment of a national gender database, data is provided by the justice, security, education, health and other sectors.

Temporary special measures

21. Adopted in 2012, the National Programme for Public Administration Reform is designed to ensure the establishment of a strong and effective public administration. The latter should form the basis for sustainable development as well as for consolidation of peace and democracy. The National Programme is tackling the problem of a dysfunctional central administration: weak organization and procedures; the worrisome situation of the civil service; obstacles to the development of information and communication technologies, resulting in a multiplicity of private systems of payment; the marginalization of the General Statutes for the Civil Service; the proliferation of government agencies in all their forms and an unhealthy climate of discontent among civil servants, mainly over their pay.

22. Implementation of the Public Administration Reform Programme is coordinated by the Permanent Secretariat of the Ministry of the Civil Service, Labour and Employment. Employees in this service also work to implement the Administration Reform Programme and are paid by the Government.

Stereotypes and harmful practices

23. Stereotypes are a handicap to the elimination of discrimination against women. A variety of stereotypes have been observed, including with regard to health, education, participation in decision-making, defence and security. Progress has been achieved on several fronts as a result of the measures taken and applied through various programmes, projects and activities.

24. In the area of health, the Government of Burundi places particular emphasis on programmes to reduce not only the seroprevalence rate but also the feminization of HIV/AIDS, including through action under the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan to Combat AIDS of the National Anti-AIDS Council (CNLS), which includes gender as a separate component.

25. The following tables contain information on trends in the number of women undergoing anti-retroviral therapy and those benefiting from the Prevention of Mother-to-child Transmission (PMTCT) programme.

Table: Trends in the number of women undergoing ARV therapy

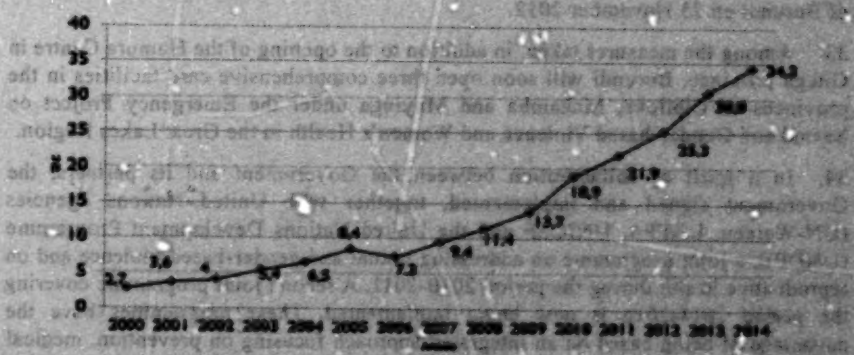
Year	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*
No. of women	17 604	22 735	26 402	29 121	32 802

Table 2: Trends in the number of women in the Programme for the Prevention of Mother-to-child Transmission (PMTCT)

Year	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*
No. of women	1 582	2 617	2 670	2 742	3 084

26. Stereotyping has also been observed with respect to contraceptive use. Increased public awareness of the use of reproductive health services has led to an increase in the number of women who have access to these services, as shown in the graph below.

27. Trends in the contraceptive prevalence rate from 2000 to 2014 (2015 report of the Ministry of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS: National Reproductive Health Programme).



28. With regard to defence and security, fields which were long reserved exclusively for men, since 2013, the number of female police recruits has increased to a minimum of 35 per cent in all categories.

29. The enrolment rate of women in the Ministry of National Defence and War Veterans rose from 0.00% to 10% (1993-2014).

Trends in the number of women in the army, according to rank

Rank	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*
Generals	0				0
Field officers	3				5
Junior commanders	31				57
Non-commissioned officers	28				43
Army women (rank and file)	65				138

30. There has also been progress in women's participation in decision-making. The following results were achieved thanks to the Constitution, which recognizes the vital role of women in national development.

Representation of women in decision-making bodies after the 2015 elections

Institution	*Government*	*National Assembly*	*Senate*	*Provincial administration*	*Communal administrators*	*Hillside community and neighbourhood leaders*
% of women	30	36.44	41.8	16.6	32	6.3

31. Measures being taken to eradicate stereotypes and discrimination against women include further implementation of the Constitution, which stipulates that women must represent a minimum of 30 per cent of government officials and Members of Parliament (articles 129, 164 and 180). The Electoral Code has applied that quota to the membership of the Communal Councils as well.

32. Burundi has adopted the Secretary-General's slogan "UNITE to End Violence Against Women". The "zero tolerance for sexual and gender-based violence" campaign was officially launched by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Burundi on 25 November 2012.

33. Among the measures taken, in addition to the opening of the Humura Centre in Gitega province, Burundi will soon open three comprehensive care facilities in the provinces of Cibitoke, Makamba and Muyinga under the Emergency Project on Sexual and Gender-based Violence and Women's Health in the Great Lakes Region.

34. In a spirit of collaboration between the Government and its partners, the Government signed and implemented, together with United Nations agencies (UN-Women, UNFPA, UNICEF and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)), a joint programme on addressing sexual and gender-based violence and on reproductive health during the period 2010-2011. A second joint programme covering the period 2014-2016 is now being implemented. These programmes have the advantage of being based on an integrated approach focusing on prevention, medical care, and psychosocial and legal assistance in addition to punishment. Preventive

activities have been scaled up: the annual campaign of 16 days of activism against gender-based violence, awareness-raising projects on the integration of women in elected and non-elected posts, and radio and television spots on various topics (health, education, sexual and gender-based violence) have raised considerable awareness of the need to address sexual and gender-based violence.

35. Annual workshops conducted by provincial and communal officials on their role in addressing sexual and gender-based violence have led to commitments on priorities for the coming year on zero tolerance for crimes of sexual and gender-based violence.

36. Achievements resulting from these measures, though the list is not exhaustive, include:

- Men's and women's increased awareness of changing mentalities and social norms
- The right of girls to return to school after pregnancy
- Girls' decision to register for science tracks
- The use of contraceptive methods

Violence against women

37. The National Strategy and Plan of Action to Combat Sexual and Gender-based Violence are currently under evaluation. Funding has now been mobilized, and the consultant recruitment process will soon commence.

According to data from the Humura Centre, a comprehensive care facility:

- In 2013, 1,950 victims (1,804 women and 146 men) of sexual and gender-based violence received treatment.
- In 2014, 1,395 victims (1,227 women and 168 men) received treatment.
- In 2015, 1,334 victims (1,197 women and 137 men) received treatment.

38. Courts refer to the Criminal Code in imposing penalties on offenders.

39. The Humura Centre reports that sentences were handed down for 10 of the 79 cases examined in 2012; 70 of the 174 cases examined in 2013; 43 of the 123 cases examined in 2014; 37 of the 99 cases examined in 2015; and 21 of the 39 examined this year up to 10 June 2016.

40. The measures taken to raise women's awareness of the criminal provisions applied in cases of sexual and gender-based violence and to encourage them to pursue criminal proceedings include the launch of the "zero tolerance of sexual and gender-based violence" campaign by the President of Burundi in 2012, followed by the development of awareness-raising programmes, which are still being organized in communities by various public and private figures (CDFCs, civil society organizations including the National Women's Forum, community leaders, members of community networks to address sexual and gender-based violence and joint security committees).

41. The annual 16 Days Campaign to Combat Violence Against Women gives has further increased awareness.

Concerning the 13 documented cases (Cabinet)

42. Burundi refers to the evidence provided by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) dealing with sexual violence, such as the Seruka Centre, as confirmation that the number of cases related to sexual violence actually decreased during the conflict that began in April 2015. Investigations by care facilities for victims of sexual and gender-based violence did not turn up additional information.

Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution

43. Women have the same access to justice as men (see reply to question 3).

44. Prostitution is not legalized in Burundi. Article 539 of the Criminal Code stipulates that "whoever has violated public morals to satisfy the passions of another person or persons by instigating, abetting or facilitating debauchery, corruption, and the prostitution of persons of either sex aged or apparently aged 21 and over shall be sentenced to between one and five years' imprisonment and a fine of between 50,000 and 200,000 francs".

45. Prostitutes under the age of 18 are considered minors. Article 540 of the Criminal Code sets out the consequences for individuals who lure minors into prostitution. Article 541 encourages all natural or legal persons who take preventive, assistance or rehabilitation measures to support persons who become involved in prostitution or are in danger of becoming prostitutes.

46. Measures to protect prostitutes under the age of 18 (minors) include:

- The establishment of two rehabilitation centres for minors in conflict with the law, one in Rumonge (southern Burundi) and the other in Ruyigi (eastern Burundi), under Ministerial Order No. 550/663 of 17 April 2015 on the establishment of centres for minors in conflict with the law by the Ministry of Justice.
- The creation of specialized chambers for minors under district courts and courts of appeal and in prosecutors' offices and prosecutors' offices attached to courts of appeal by Ministerial Order No. 550/1622 of 19 November 2013 on the purpose, composition and functioning of specialized chambers for minors and victims of sexual violence in Burundi, represents an enormous stride in the protection of minors, including prostitutes under the age of 18.
- Act No. 1/28 of 29 October 2014 on the prevention and suppression of trafficking in persons and on the protection of trafficking victims, enacted by the President of Burundi, and a multisectoral action plan (2014-2017), which has already been drafted and is currently being implemented.

47. According to the evaluation of the implementation of the strategy for the socioeconomic reintegration of victims of war in 2014, internally displaced persons had the opportunity to choose lasting solutions for themselves. Some chose to voluntarily return to their places of origin and were assisted in their reintegration by the Ministry of Human Rights, Social Affairs and Gender, and others remained in areas that are gradually turning into integrated rural villages and are protected by security officials (police or military).

48. Application of the Trafficking in Persons Act protects all women and girls regardless of their place of residence.

49. With a view to combating trafficking in persons, the Government of Burundi has strengthened prevention and intervention mechanisms through collaboration with police units based in all the provinces, and at the national level, and collaborates with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) at the regional and international levels. In addition to the Criminal Code, which criminalizes trafficking in persons, legislation on trafficking in persons was adopted in 2014.

Nationality

50. The amendment to the Law of Nationality has not yet entered into force and remains a concern of the Government, which has already taken many measures to promote and protect the rights of women. In practice, by ministerial order, a child born to a mother of Burundian nationality acquires its mother's nationality. The Ministry of Justice is based on the Constitution, which does not make a distinction between men and women. For example, a study was conducted on the impact of the lack of a written law on inheritance, matrimonial regimes and gifts and a committee was established to review the findings; the review committee's conclusions are pending. The Government and civil society organizations are currently preparing a list of all the discriminatory laws.

Education

51. From 2009 to date, Burundi notes significant progress in the area of education, as demonstrated in paragraph 77 of the report. Parity in primary-school enrolment was achieved in 2011. This progress was achieved thanks to various measures. In addition to the progress described in the report, Burundi wishes to point out an increase in community awareness-raising campaigns organized by CDFC, the National Women's Forum and different local organizations. Awareness-raising campaigns are also broadcast on various radio programmes. The introduction of school clubs and the school nutrition programme, with the support of the World Food Programme, has led to increased retention of school children, especially girls.

52. At the level of the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research, the statistics service provides data on school pregnancies. These data are provided regularly (quarterly) by the Provincial Education Departments.

53. With the aim of addressing violence in schools and on the way to school, strict measures to protect primary school children were included in the revised Criminal Code.

54. Article 557 stipulates that: "rape is punishable by 20-30 years' imprisonment and a fine of 100,000-500,000 francs:

"1° when committed by several people acting as perpetrators or accomplices;

"2° when the perpetrator is carrying a weapon;

"3° when the victim's health is seriously impaired and/or the victim sustains serious physical and/or psychological effects, such as mutilation, permanent disability or the transmission of a disease;

"4° when committed with the use or the threat of use of a weapon;

"5° when committed against a child under the age of 12;

"6° when committed in public. "

55. Article 558 stipulates that rape is punishable by life imprisonment:

1° when the perpetrator knew that he or she was a carrier of an incurable sexually transmitted disease;

2° when the rape resulted in the death of the victim;

3° when the rape was committed against a child under the age of 12;

4° when the rape was preceded, accompanied or followed by an act of torture or barbarism.

56. At the institutional level, the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research, in collaboration with UNFPA, the Ministry of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS, the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture and the Ministry of Human Rights, Social Affairs and Gender adopted, under the Joint Programme (financed by the Netherlands), a minimum package of activities for the purposes of disseminating the "Zero Pregnancy at School" campaign.

57. The strategies implemented to achieve this include:

- Capacity-building of Provincial Education Directors and Communal Education Directors.
- Guidance for girls in schools.
- Establishment of counselling services in schools that enable girls to confide in the authorities in the case of an identified potential threat.
- Education of students on the subject of sexual violence.
- Establishment of monitoring committees.
- Creation of a network between the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research and the Ministry of Health and the Fight against AIDS with the aim of exchanging information on sexual violence and finding appropriate remedies.

58. Various support structures have been set up for victims of sexual and gender-based violence in addition to those mentioned in the report. Three other victim care centres have been opened in addition to the Humura, Seruka, Nturengaho and Inabeza centres (the latter three are non-governmental). With the aim of coordinating different responses, a working sectoral gender group was established to coordinate national development assistance through thematic subgroups, including a subgroup on addressing sexual and gender-based violence, which serves as a forum for all experts in the field to exchange experiences, offer guidance and harmonize responses.

59. Burundi has adopted legislation allowing girls to return to school after an unwanted pregnancy.

60. A girl was recently expelled for good from school with no prospect of returning. Women's organizations have strongly advocated for pregnant girls to be able to return to school after childbirth. The Government has responded positively to their appeals.

61. Every school year, a committee is established under the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research for the reintegration of students who have left school for various reasons, including girls who are temporarily absent in order to care for a newborn baby. The committee observed that all these girls have been systematically reintegrated into the education system.

62. Burundi has already implemented school feeding for schoolchildren in food-insecure regions in two types of school canteens:

- Traditional school canteens (which serve imported products) in the Kirundo, Kayanza, Ngozi and Muyinga provinces.
- Home-grown school canteens (which serve food produced locally) in the Cibitoke, Bubanza and Bujumbura provinces. This is the type of canteen that the Government finds most desirable because it is a driver of rural development.

63. The Government of Burundi sought the expertise of the Centre of Excellence against Hunger in Brazil for support when developing the national school feeding and health strategy.

64. Burundi introduced a reform to merge six years of primary school with three years of secondary school into a single block, with the aim of providing schoolchildren with the skills needed to integrate into socioeconomic life without any difficulty. This involved a review of the school curriculum to ensure that it corresponded to the desired educational profile of students by the end of the ninth year of school. Special emphasis is placed on the entrepreneurship course, which will enable children who do not have the opportunity to continue with post-primary school studies to manage in life. With regard to the impact of this reform on girls, it should be noted that, before the reform was introduced, girls who were expelled from the system in the sixth year of school would enter into early marriage without the slightest understanding of reproductive health. After the ninth year of school, girls begin to develop more mature ways of thinking, which enables them to grasp all the aspects and threats of early marriage. In terms of demographics, it is not difficult to imagine the differences in the impact that marriage would have on a cohort of girls married after the sixth year of school and a cohort married after the ninth year of school.

Employment

65. Amendment of the Labour Code is already under way. A tripartite commission composed of the Ministry of the Civil Service, Labour and Employment, the Association of Employers and the Confederation of Burundian Unions (COSYBU), the largest workers' confederation, is flagging provisions of the Code for revision or amendment. The Commission is also looking not only at conventions and recommendations of the International Labour Organization (ILO), but also at other conventions that Burundi has ratified. It is calling for maternity leave and benefits for women, and for dealing with other discriminatory measures.

66. With the adoption of a gender-sensitive employment policy with regard to women in the informal sectors of the economy, women's organizations promoting entry in the import-export sectors, catering, cross-border trade and various other services have emerged.

67. Among the women's organizations that have built management and entrepreneurial capacity are the Burundian Association of Businesswomen (AFAB), which mobilized women to engage in domestic and international trade, and the African Women's Entrepreneurship Program (AWEP), a programme of the Department of State of the United States, launched in July 2010, aimed at strengthening the leadership capacity of women entrepreneurs in Burundi. Thanks to this organization, women entrepreneurs have benefited from training and information, have access to resources to develop their businesses and can network with other women's business organizations. Three microfinance institutions — Women's Initiative for Self-Empowerment (WISE), CECM and SOFEPAC, encouraged women to enter the business world by opening savings and credit centres and providing financial services to women with very little capital.

68. Regarding the government strategy to combat the worst forms of child labour, Burundi adopted, in September 2009, the National Action Plan for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, which is being implemented by the Ministry of the Civil Service, Labour and Employment.

69. The aim of this Action Plan was to abolish all the worst forms of child labour by 2015, and to be a decisive factor in the abolition of all forms of child labour by 2025.

70. The Government of Burundi continues to reaffirm its desire to align the Labour Code of Burundi with the Convention on the Rights of the Child in respect of the minimum age of employability (16 to 18 years). A free hotline was set up in 2015 to assist children in difficulty.

71. The Government, through the Ministry of Human Rights, Social Affairs and Gender, is preparing a Code on Children's Rights covering all aspects of the promotion and protection of the rights of the child.

Health

72. The Government of Burundi has committed itself to prioritizing the promotion of public health. Indeed, a sound austerity policy that promotes sound management of budgetary appropriations and revenue recovery has sustained implementation of a free health care programme for children under 5 years of age and women in childbirth. There can be no degradation of essential health services as long as extension of the health infrastructure network continues to increase accessibility and access to health care by all citizens, particularly women and children. The staff of these health facilities are civil servants who continue to be paid by the State.

73. Strategies put in place to reduce the malnutrition rate include:

- Implementation of the National Agricultural Investment Plan (PNIA) 2012-2017 The plan consists of four programmes: (i) sustainable increase of production and food security, (ii) professionalization of producers and promotion of innovation, (iii) development of agro-industries and agribusiness and (iv) strengthening of public institutions. The Plan is the tool for implementing the National Agricultural Strategy 2008-2015 and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). Implementation of the National Agricultural Investment Plan is now being assessed with a view to reformulating the Plan and extending it until 2020. The

National Agricultural Strategy for the period 2016-2020 is in the process of being drafted.

- The National Programme for Fertilizer Subsidies (PNSEB) has been operating since 2012
- The continued implementation of the National Integrated Programme on Food and Nutrition launched in 2009
- Programme for the rapid multiplication of maize, rice, cassava, potato, banana and palm oil seeds, implemented since 2011.
- Cattle restocking, launched in 2008
- Programme for the promotion of learning and nutritional rehabilitation centres (FARN)
- Immunization and Nutrition, Vitamin and Mineral Salt Supplementation Programme for Children and Pregnant and Lactating Women

74. With regard to the strategy to reduce the vulnerability of women and girls affected by HIV/AIDS, both the Government, through the Ministry of Public Health and the Fight against AIDS, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) provide antiretroviral drugs, without distinction, to anyone for whom they are medically indicated. The Government has also scaled up a programme for the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS (MTCT). These initiatives were coupled with awareness-raising campaigns and distribution of male and female condoms. For the purpose of providing sex education, in particular on the control of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, to as many young people as possible, Burundi has long developed on-site programmes in schools. Activities are organized through "Stop AIDS Clubs" in schools and at youth centres in order to reach those not attending school. There is also a National Reproductive Health Programme which runs similar programmes for both girls and boys.

75. Burundi places particular emphasis on programmes to reduce this rate through the actions of the Strategic Plan to Combat AIDS 2014-2017 of the National Centre for the Fight against AIDS (CNLS), which includes gender as a separate factor.

Refugees and internally displaced women

76. No camps for internally displaced persons were set up following the April 2015 conflict. Inhabitants of a few districts of Bujumbura Mairie where insurrections took place have either moved in with families living in quiet neighbourhoods or moved to houses in calm neighbourhoods. With the situation under control, life is normal throughout the country and citizens go calmly about their business. However, after the failed coup, some politicians who had led the insurrections and some individuals who had followed their bad advice fled the country. These refugees are being repatriated on a large-scale and are being received by and reintegrated into their respective families.

77. Burundi is taking in refugees from the Congo and Rwanda. They are living in camps and are protected under Act No. 1/32 on Asylum and Protection of Refugees in Burundi, adopted in 2008. The implementing legislation for this Act is Ministerial Order No. 530/443 of 7 April 2009 on the composition, organization and operation of the Advisory Commission for Aliens and Refugees and of the Appeals Board. It should also be noted that the promulgation of the above-mentioned Act was

followed by the establishment of the National Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons (ONPRA) in May 2009. The development of standard operating procedures for preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence in refugee camps has defined the roles and responsibilities of each actor in the four main sectors: health, legal/judicial, security and psychosocial services.

78. Refugee women and girls enjoy security, and have access to health care, education, clean water and sanitation.

Rural women

79. Women make up the bulk of the agricultural labour force (107 women for every 100 men in the active rural population) and are the primary breadwinners, with their contribution to the household estimated at 97.4 per cent (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 2002).

80. There is still no written law on inheritance in Burundi. However, women's land rights are protected under the Basic Law and the Constitution.

81. Article 36 states that every person is entitled to own property.

82. Women therefore have the same rights as men to work the land to ensure food security for their families and for the country. To address the problem of land scarcity, women have the right to exercise any income-generating activity and have access to microcredit provided by microfinance institutions.

83. With regard to gender issues in integrating the country's agricultural policy and plans, promotion of gender equality is a primary component of the Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction (SFPR II).[1] During the period 2012-2016 in Burundi, this important development tool brought about gender mainstreaming in the revision, adoption and implementation of policies and sectoral strategies. For example, in 2008, Burundi established a National Agricultural Strategy (SNA) 2008-2015 along with a National Agricultural Investment Plan (PNIA) 2012-2017 whose fundamental vision was to ensure food security, both in quality and quantity, for all Burundians. The Strategy was aimed at transforming subsistence farming into family and commercial farming that would guarantee households a decent income but would also be environmentally friendly and promote the sound management of resources.

84. As security is guaranteed throughout the country, there are no women or girls living in conflict-affected areas. Access to education and health care is guaranteed everywhere.

85. As for women's access to credit institutions and mechanisms, the Government of Burundi has set up guarantee funds for women in microfinance institutions. The World Food Programme (WFP) also contributes to the economic empowerment of the poorest households (and of women) in the peri-urban section of the capital by providing access to microcredit.

86. Indeed, the low level of literacy, and the slim prospects for this category of women to have access to productive resources — in other words, their lack of income — drove Burundi to launch, through CARE International, the *Nawe Nuze*

[1] CSLP I was launched in 2006 and evaluated in 2011. SFGP II 2012-2016 is based on the evaluation of the previous SFGP.

(NN) programme to teach them how to build savings. It is designed to provide communities (made up mostly of women) a platform for forming or restoring ties of solidarity and mutual assistance, where members' knowledge, capacities and aspirations are cultivated with a view to attaining greater social, economic and even political empowerment. The other goal of *Nawe Nuze* is to facilitate the access of disadvantaged persons to financial services in the formal system by improving the traditional savings and credit practices of the larger community. As for results, there were 108,230 beneficiaries of this programme in 2015.

87. At each annual observance of the International Day of Rural Women, awareness-raising activities are conducted for leaders of banking institutions on mainstreaming a gender perspective into their banking policies.

Disadvantaged groups of women

88. Older women are especially vulnerable. The Government, through the Ministry of Human Rights, Social Affairs and Gender, sponsors various activities for them. With the establishment of the National Commission for Social Protection in 2013, social protection programmes have been developed in both the informal and formal sectors. Various programmes are being implemented in the informal and rural sector, including a programme for the development of individual health insurance, a programme to provide health insurance coverage to poor and vulnerable persons and a programme to strengthen measures for the protection of vulnerable groups and the extreme poor by formulating strategies and implementing existing national policies and action plans.

89. Food voluntarily donated by communities is distributed to vulnerable groups, including older persons, through government-organized solidarity campaigns in every part of the country.

90. The Government regularly provides food and non-food assistance to care facilities for older persons.

91. On the economic front, groups of women are sensitized and encouraged to integrate older women into their income-generating activities with the help of microcredit from microfinance institutions with guarantee funds for the empowerment of women established by the Government with the support of its partners.

92. Vulnerable women also receive multifaceted care, including legal, judicial, psychological, medical and economic assistance.

Family relations

93. As indicated in our reply to question 12, the Government is awaiting the review board's conclusions on the outcome of the study on the impact on men, women and the community of the lack of any law regulating inheritance, matrimonial regimes and gifts.

94. With regard to the Persons and Family Code, the Government is aware of the need to amend certain discriminatory provisions.

Optional Protocol and amendment to article 20 (1) of the Convention

95. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women Committee provides that communications may be submitted by or on behalf of individuals or groups of individuals, under the jurisdiction of a State party, claiming to be victims of a violation of any of the rights set forth in the Convention by that State party.